DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 355 702 EC 301 932

TITLE	Pocket Guide to Federal Help for Individuals with Disabilities.
INSTITUTION	Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (ED), Washington, DC. Clearinghouse on Disability Information.
REPORT NO	ED/OSERS-93-3
PUB DATE	93
NOTE	37p.; For a previous edition, see ED 295 382.
AVAILABLE FROM	Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Adults; Advocacy; Agency Role; Civil Rights; Civil Rights Legislation; *Disabilities; Educational Legislation; Elementary Secondary Education; Employment; Federal Legislation; *Federal Programs; Financial Support; Government Role; Housing; *Human Services; Medical Services; *Public Agencies; Taxes; Transportation; Vocational Rehabilitation
IDENTIFIERS	Americans with Disabilities Act 1990

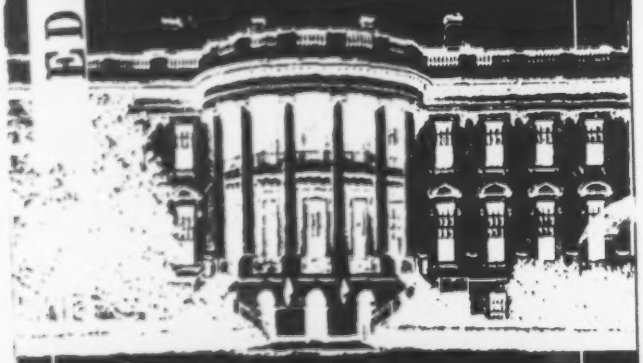
ABSTRACT

This publication contains information on government-wide benefits and services for which individuals with disabilities may be eligible. Information is organized into sections on programs for specific disability groups, vocational rehabilitation, education, employment, financial assistance, medical assistance, civil rights, housing, tax benefits, and transportation. Contact information is provided for governmental offices involved in service provision. A separate section describes the Americans with Disabilities Act and key offices to contact regarding its requirements in the areas of employment, public services, public accommodations, and telecommunications. (PB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED355702

POCKET GUIDE



to

FEDERAL HELP

for Individuals with Disabilities

EC 301932

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

POCKET GUIDE

TO

FEDERAL HELP
for Individuals with Disabilities

Produced by the:

CLEARINGHOUSE ON DISABILITY INFORMATION

OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

ROOM 3132 SWITZER BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20202-2524

1993

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Washington, DC 20402

FOREWORD

For more than eighteen years, the POCKET GUIDE TO FEDERAL HELP FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES has been one of the most widely distributed publications produced by the U.S. Department of Education and its predecessor, the Office of Education in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Since its inception in 1980, the Department of Education has committed itself to ensuring that all individuals with disabilities achieve their full potential as productive, fully-contributing members of our society. The publication of this booklet is part of this continuing effort.

Written for people with disabilities, their families, and service providers, this publication contains information on government-wide benefits and services for which individuals with disabilities may be eligible. As we publish this new edition, it is our sincere hope that it will reach the wide and varied audience for which it is intended, and that it will increase awareness and provide useful information.

Knowledge is often the first step toward empowerment. We believe that the information contained in this POCKET GUIDE will begin to empower those who read it with the knowledge they need to achieve independence, which is not a privilege in our country, but every person's right.

The Clearinghouse on Disability Information

Office of Special Education
and Rehabilitative Services

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROGRAMS FOR SPECIFIC DISABILITY GROUPS 1

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION 2

EDUCATION 5

EMPLOYMENT 11

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE 13

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE 15

CIVIL RIGHTS 17

HOUSING 23

TAX BENEFITS 24

TRANSPORTATION 25

THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT 27

PREFACE

This booklet is meant to make you, an individual with disabilities, or the parent/guardian of a child with disabilities, aware of the principal government services for which you or your child may be eligible. This revised edition describes benefits applicable specifically to those who are blind, deaf, or developmentally disabled. These persons are also eligible for the general benefits as outlined in this booklet.

Because so much of the federal contribution to services for individuals with disabilities is made to states -- and the states determine how to spend the money, within certain guidelines -- it would be impossible to pinpoint exactly what you will find in your own state or locality. What we have tried to outline for you in this guide is the general scope of federal support for services to individuals with disabilities. Included are the names and addresses of the various federal agencies that can steer you to their state and/or local counterpart offices. You may also wish to contact us for a listing of key agencies in your state. These agencies should be your starting point for exploring the services available to you where you live. Write to the Federal Headquarters if you are unable to reach your state service agencies directly.

States and localities may provide services which are financed out of their own resources. These are not discussed in this guide. To find out about any of these special programs, contact an information and referral center in your vicinity to help put you in touch with the array of services for which you may qualify.

We hope this guide will alert you to the variety of services which may be of benefit to you and that it will get you started on the road to contacting those that are pertinent to your needs. Every time you call a state or local agency, we suggest that you ask for the names of other people or agencies that might also be helpful. You may accumulate a number of useful and helpful contacts in this way.

VETERANS

If you are a veteran with disabilities and want to know about the many programs available to you, apply to your nearest Department of Veterans Affairs field office, or write to:

Department of Veterans Affairs
Washington, DC 20420

PROGRAMS FOR LOW INCOME, INDIAN, OR ELDERLY POPULATIONS

If you are an American Indian, a person over 65, or a person with little or no income, you may qualify for additional programs based on factors other than your disability. For leads on tracking these down, call your local welfare office, your local public housing authority, or your Indian tribal housing authority. If you are elderly, you may be eligible for special nutrition programs such as Meals on Wheels, or for other special services. The federal government provides funds for area resource centers for the aging, usually listed in the Yellow Pages under "Aged" or "Elderly" or "Social Services."

A WORD OF ADVICE

Use this booklet to help you track down the appropriate agencies nearest you. Remember, not every service is available and not every person can be helped 100 percent. Keep in mind that every year new programs begin and some old ones end, particularly at the state and local levels. Keep in touch with your contacts and stay as aware as you can, through reading and talking to knowledgeable people about what is happening in the area of services to individuals with disabilities. There are many excellent voluntary organizations, as well as state, local, and federal offices that can help you. Numerous newsletters are produced by groups of and for individuals with disabilities.

We hope you will take advantage of all these avenues and that your search for assistance will be a fruitful one.

PROGRAMS FOR SPECIFIC DISABILITY GROUPS

Special programs and benefits for blind and deaf individuals are listed in the appropriate section (e.g., vocational rehabilitation or education). Since the Program for Developmental Disabilities encompasses medical assistance, job training, and social and other services, and is administered by a special state agency, it is described below.

PROGRAMS FOR DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED INDIVIDUALS

The developmental disabilities (DD) program makes use of existing services in health, welfare, education, and rehabilitation to provide for the long-range needs of people with developmental disabilities. These disabilities are defined as severe, chronic disabilities attributable to mental or physical impairment, which are manifested before age 22, result in substantial functional limitations in several areas of life, and require services over an extended period.

Availability of services will vary in all communities, and services can include diagnosis, evaluation, and treatment of the disabling condition, personal care, day care, and special living arrangements, training for jobs, education, and sheltered employment, recreation programs, social and legal services, information and referral to services, and transportation.

Under the law, people with disabilities have a right to "appropriate treatment, services, and habilitation." A major component in the DD program is the basic state grant -- a formula grant to states for planning, administration, and services. The goal of the program is to improve the quality of services through comprehensive planning, coordination of resources, and developing programs to fill gaps in services.

Each state has a designated agency to administer the developmental disabilities program. Also in each state is a protection and advocacy office where people with developmental disabilities or their parents can turn if

they cannot find help in their communities. At the national level, the address is:

Administration on Developmental Disabilities
Department of Health and Human Services
Room 329D Humphrey Building
Washington, DC 20201

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

In each state, there is an agency responsible for the administration of the programs of vocational rehabilitation, supported employment, and independent living for persons with disabilities. Each of these programs has different eligibility criteria and purposes. The vocational rehabilitation program is designed to assist eligible persons with disabilities to achieve suitable employment; the supported employment program works with individuals with severe disabilities who require ongoing support services to enter or maintain competitive employment; and the independent living program is focused on working with persons with severe disabilities to enable them to live independently in the community and in the home.

All of these programs are state-federal programs in that the federal government provides the bulk of the funds for their operation, leadership in program development, technical assistance in program implementation, and monitoring of program administration. Each state has designated an agency to be responsible for the day-to-day administration of the programs. This agency is responsible for both the determination of eligibility of persons for the programs and the provision of services.

Services are tailored to the unique needs of the individual and are guided by an individualized written rehabilitation program (IWRP) which is developed by the eligible person and a representative of the state agency. The services available under these programs are quite varied and may include the following:

- medical, psychological, vocational; and other types of assessments to determine the functional strengths and limitations of the individual as these relate to the program eligibility criteria and the development of appropriate rehabilitation programming with suitable objectives and goals;
- counseling and guidance to assist an eligible person in selecting suitable rehabilitation programming, including the types of services needed to achieve the person's choice of a goal;
- referral to secure necessary services from other agencies;
- physical and mental restoration services necessary to correct or substantially modify a physical or mental condition which is stable or slowly progressive;
- vocational and other types of training, including on-the-job training, trade schools, and training in institutions of higher education;
- interpreter and reader services;
- services to family members when necessary to achieve the rehabilitation programming objectives;
- rehabilitation technology services;
- placement in suitable employment;
- post-employment services necessary to maintain or regain other suitable employment; and
- other goods and services necessary to achieve rehabilitation objectives.

The state agency can provide some of these services, such as, counseling and guidance, referral, and placement directly to an eligible person; while for other services, the agency may arrange for their provision by a vendor such as a hospital or educational institution. For many of the services, the state agency will participate with the eligible person in sharing the costs connected with the services. The extent of financial participation will vary depending on the needs and resources of both the eligible person and the agency's policies.

Since the programs are administered by the states within the broad framework of federal requirements, the states have a good deal of flexibility in the administration of these programs. Thus it is important to seek information on these programs from the state agency. In some states, the agency will be an independent agency; in other states, the agency may be part of a larger agency such as one devoted to education, employment, or human services.

FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND OR VISUALLY IMPAIRED

In 25 states, a separate commission (and in all other states a special vocational rehabilitation unit) deals specifically with services to people with visual impairments. Staff of these units limit their caseloads to clients who are visually impaired or serve as consultants to regular vocational rehabilitation counselors. They are trained to assist these clients in learning skills of daily living, in mobility training, in filling out job application forms, and in other rehabilitation needs. These units also provide funding for reader services for college students who are visually impaired.

FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

Special emphasis on rehabilitation services to people who are hearing impaired has its origin at the federal level within the Rehabilitation Services Administration at the:

Deafness and Communicative Disorders Branch
Switzer Building 3221
Washington, DC 20202-2736
(202) 205-9001
(202) 205-8298 (TDD)

This office provides leadership and consultation to state agencies in developing rehabilitation programs and services for persons with deafness and communicative disorders.

The Rehabilitation Services Administration maintains a liaison staff person in deafness rehabilitation in each of the ten RSA regional offices, and sponsors numerous rehabilitation counselor training programs to prepare persons for working with clients who are deaf. The

agency also funds several projects around the country to train interpreters to assist individuals who are deaf.

FOR DEAF/BLIND PEOPLE

The federal government provides funds that help support the Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youth and Adults. To explore your or your family member's eligibility for the Center's rehabilitation programs, write:

Helen Keller National Center
111 Middle Neck Road
Sands Point, NY 11050
(516) 944-8900 (Voice or TDD)

EDUCATION

The federal government provides assistance at many levels to enable children, youth, and adults to receive education and training. People with disabilities share the same right to educational opportunities and services as everyone else.

YOUR RIGHTS UNDER THE LAW

Under the provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), formerly the Education of the Handicapped Act (EHA), your state and local school district must provide a free appropriate elementary and secondary education for all children with disabilities from ages 6 through 21. States receiving funds under Section 619 of IDEA must provide services to all 3 through 5 year olds. In addition, states receiving funds under Part H of IDEA must serve infants from birth through 2. Eligibility requirements for infants and toddlers and their families under the Part H program are determined by the states.

All parents have the right to participate in and approve the individualized education program (IEP) developed for their child. When children are placed in private schools by **state or local education systems** to receive an appropriate education, it must be done at no cost to the parent. Additional services such as transportation and special aids must also be provided at public expense.

Final responsibility for implementing the special education and related services for 3 to 21 year olds under IDEA rests with the state education agency. For further information on special education programs in your state or locality, contact your state, county, or local education offices.

Additional information on relevant sources of assistance in your state, the rights of children with disabilities and their parents, appeal procedures, and general advocacy information in the education field is available from:

National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities
P.O. Box 1492
Washington, DC 20013-1492
1-800-999-5599

HEAD START

In 1965, Project Head Start was developed by state and local education systems with federal assistance. It is a child development program which provides comprehensive educational and social services, parent involvement, and health services, including medical, dental, nutrition, and mental health services, to preschool children, age 3 to 5, 90 percent of whom must be from low-income families. Migrant Head Start programs serve children from birth, and 35 Parent and Child Centers serve children from birth to age 2.

Beginning in 1982, federal law has required that at least 10 percent of the total number of placements in Head Start programs in each state must be available to children who are disabled and require special services. Head Start is a mainstream placement option for children whose individualized education program (IEP) calls for placement with nondisabled children.

For more information about eligibility and available Head Start programs in your area, look under "Project

Head Start" in your telephone directory, contact your local school board, or write to:

Head Start Bureau
P.O. Box 1182
Washington, D.C. 20013

SCHOOLS FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND OR VISUALLY IMPAIRED

There are approximately 55 special schools for children who are blind or visually impaired throughout the country that provide specific educational and training curricula for grade levels K through 12. Examples of courses include: braille, skills of daily living, orientation and mobility, plus the full range of regular academic curricula offered in other schools. Many of these schools will also accept blind students with multiple disabilities. For further information on schools in your area, contact your local school district.

LIBRARY SERVICES FOR SPECIAL GROUPS

The National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped has a network of cooperating regional libraries throughout the United States, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Together they produce and distribute -- on free loan -- an extensive collection of books, magazines, bibliographies, directories, and reference circulars. These are made available in braille and recorded form, along with the necessary playback equipment.

Eligible persons are U.S. citizens (here or abroad) who cannot read standard printed matter. These include individuals who are blind, some individuals with physical disabilities, and those who are learning disabled. Certification by a competent authority (usually a physician) as to the nature of the disability is all that is needed to apply for services. For further information on

any of these services, or to locate the regional library in your area, write to the:

National Library Service for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped
Library of Congress
Washington, DC 20542

The Department supports the work of the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) which produces and distributes educational materials adapted for students who are legally blind and enrolled in formal education programs below the college level. These materials include educational tools such as braille typewriters, textbooks in braille and large type and other supplies. The Printing House also uses a portion of its annual appropriation to conduct research related to developing and improving products and to provide advisory services to consumer organizations. For more information, write to the:

American Printing House for the Blind
1839 Frankfort Avenue
P.O. Box 6085
Louisville, KY 40206-0085

FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

The U.S. Department of Education supports postsecondary education of individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing through four regional postsecondary education centers and 49 single and multi-state projects serving deaf-blind children and youth. For information, write to the:

Division of Educational Services
Office of Special Education Programs
U.S. Department of Education
Washington, DC 20202

SCHOOLS FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

There are more than 16,000 local public school districts that serve students who are deaf and hard of hearing. Information under the "Education" section of this booklet refers to local public education of students with hearing impairments as well as to people with other disabilities.

In addition, there are 62 public residential schools in the United States for children who are deaf. These schools accept children from infancy through grade 12. Contact your local or state board of education for the location of a school within your state.

Gallaudet University is funded by the federal government and was established to provide a liberal higher education to people who are deaf. In addition to its undergraduate program, Gallaudet operates graduate programs at the masters and doctoral levels as well as a program of research. On agreement with the U.S. Department of Education (ED), Gallaudet operates a Model Secondary School for the Deaf (MSSD) for students from the District of Columbia and from around the United States. The University also operates the Kendall Demonstration Elementary School (KDES) which disseminates materials and technical assistance to educational facilities serving students who are deaf and hard of hearing. For more information write to:

Gallaudet University
800 Florida Avenue, N.E.
Washington, DC 20002

The National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) in Rochester, NY, was created by public law as a special technical college for students who are deaf from all states. NTID is a residential facility for postsecondary technical training and education for individuals who are deaf whose purpose is to promote the employment of persons who are deaf by providing technical and professional education. For more information, write to:

National Technical Institute for the Deaf
One Lomb Memorial Drive
Rochester, NY 14623

U.S. Department of Education
Special Institutions
Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services
Washington, DC 20202

POSTSECONDARY INFORMATION AND RESOURCE CENTER

The HEATH Resource Center, the national clearinghouse for postsecondary education for individuals with disabilities, operates under legislative mandate to collect and disseminate information nationally about disability issues in postsecondary education. The HEATH Resource Center is designed to:

- provide information on education and training opportunities for adults with disabilities;
- promote accommodations to enable full participation of people with disabilities in regular or specialized postsecondary programs; and
- recommend strategies to enable people with disabilities to pursue education after high school in the least restrictive environments.

For additional information contact:

HEATH Resource Center
One Dupont Circle
Suite 800
Washington, DC 20036
1-800-544-3284

FEDERAL STUDENT FINANCIAL AID

There are no special federal financial aid programs to assist individuals with disabilities to attend college except when a state vocational rehabilitation agency has determined that the best preparation for a job for a particular individual with a disability is a college education. In these cases financial assistance may be provided. There are, however, five kinds of federal financial aid programs available to all students in need:

- grants given on the basis of financial need which do not have to be repaid;
- loans which must be repaid (Perkins or guaranteed student loans);
- work-study programs in which students are given part-time jobs to help them through school;

- benefits, such as GI Bill, Social Security, and Junior GI which do not have to be repaid.

To learn more about the various federal student aid programs, see your high school guidance counselor or the financial aid officer at any college or vocational school, or write to:

Office of Student Financial Assistance
P.O. Box 84
Washington, DC 20044

EMPLOYMENT

There are currently more than 2000 local Employment Service (ES) offices located throughout the United States. More commonly referred to as State Employment Services or State Job Services, these public employment centers exist to help employers find workers, and workers to find jobs. Helping job seekers with disabilities is a specific responsibility of the ES, and each office is mandated by law to employ a specialist trained to work with persons with disabilities.

For more information or for help in finding a job, look in your telephone directory under "employment services" or under state government listings which will refer you to the state agency responsible for the ES program in your area.

FEDERAL JOBS

All federal jobs for regular appointment must be announced to the public and are filled on a competitive basis. There are a small number of special schedule "A" appointment positions for individuals with disabilities which are not competitive under the following conditions:

- individuals who are mentally retarded referred by their vocational rehabilitation counselor;
- individuals with severe physical disabilities referred through vocational rehabilitation counselors and who are taking a trial appointment.

FEDERAL JOB INFORMATION CENTERS

For more information about federal employment possibilities, you should contact the nearest Federal Job Information Center. The Office of Personnel Management maintains many centers to provide federal job information and to help you apply for federal employment. Special arrangements are available for individuals with disabilities. Federal Job Information Centers are listed under "U.S. Government" in area phone directories. Federal employment information will also be posted in all State Job Service agencies.

Some of the tests used in screening federal job applicants can be taken by a person who is blind or visually impaired in braille, large type, or in recorded form. If the test is not available in any of these formats, the Job Information Center is required to provide reader assistance to ensure that the same standards are used in screening all applicants.

In addition, all federal agencies have selective placement coordinators who provide assistance to individuals with disabilities.

STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT JOBS

State, county, and local governments have their own civil service systems which can also be explored for possible job opportunities. In addition, most states have a Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities which works with employers to open up job opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

JOB TRAINING PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM (JTPA)

The Job Training Partnership Program (JTPA) was created to prepare youth and unskilled adults for entry into the labor force and to afford job training to economically disadvantaged individuals and others facing serious barriers to employment who are in special need of training to obtain productive employment. Many individuals with disabilities will fit the eligibility criteria. Your local State Employment Security Service or

Mayor's Office will be able to give you more information about JTPA programs in your area.

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

People with disabilities who are interested in going into business for themselves may qualify for federal assistance and low cost loans from the Small Business Administration (SBA). If there is no listing in your phone book for an SBA office in your area, write to:

Small Business Administration
Financial Assistance Division
Handicapped Assistance Loan Program
Suite 8300
409 3rd Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20416

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

There are two basic federal programs providing direct and continuing financial assistance to people with disabilities.

SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY INSURANCE BENEFITS

Social Security disability insurance benefits may be paid to a worker who is disabled and is under age 65 and his or her family when earnings are lost or reduced due to the worker's disability.

You may be considered "disabled" if you have a physical or mental impairment which (1) prevents you from working and (2) is expected to last for at least 12 months or to result in death. A person is considered "blind" when he or she has a central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye with the use of corrective lenses or a visual field reduction of 20 degrees or less.

Before a worker with a disability and his or her family can apply for benefits, the worker must have credit for a certain amount of work under social security. The exact amount of work credit depends on the worker's age.

Monthly disability benefits can be paid to a disabled worker's:

- unmarried children under age 18 (or under age 19 if full-time high school or elementary school students);
- unmarried children age 18 or older who were severely disabled before age 22 and continue to be disabled;
- wife or husband age 62 or older;
- wife under age 62 if she is caring for the worker's child who is under age 16 or disabled and receiving benefits based on the disabled worker's earnings.

NOTE: Children age 18 or older who were disabled before age 22 also can receive monthly benefits when either parent becomes entitled to retirement payments or dies after having worked long enough under social security. A disabled widow or widower or disabled surviving divorced wife age 50 or older may be eligible for monthly survivors payments when a worker dies.

For additional information, contact your local social security office which is listed in the telephone directory under "Social Security Administration."

SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME

Supplemental security income (SSI) makes monthly payments to people who are aged, disabled, or blind and have limited income and resources (assets).

To receive SSI payments on the basis of disability or blindness, you must meet the social security definition of "disabled" or "blind." You do not need social security work credits to get SSI payments. People may be eligible for SSI even if they have never worked. People who receive SSI benefits can also qualify for social security if they are eligible.

Children who are disabled or blind, as well as adults, may qualify for SSI payments. To be eligible for SSI, you must have limited income and resources and be a citizen of the U.S. or its territories.

States may add to the federal SSI payments. The states also provide Medicaid, food stamps, and various social and rehabilitation services.

21

For more information about SSI, contact your local social security office.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

The primary sources of federal medical assistance for people with disabilities are Medicare and Medicaid, Maternal and Child Health Programs, and the Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment Program.

MEDICARE

The health insurance program is designed to serve everyone over 65 years of age and people with disabilities under 65 years of age who:

- have been entitled to receive Social Security disability benefits for a total of 24 months; or
- who need dialysis treatments or a kidney transplant because of permanent kidney failure.

The program is not based on income and is available regardless of financial need.

The Medicare program has two parts:

Part A: Hospital insurance at no premium that helps pay for care while in the hospital and for related health care services after leaving the hospital. Certain deductibles and coinsurance amounts apply.

Part B: Voluntary medical insurance at a monthly premium that helps pay doctor bills and other approved medical services.

More information about Medicare is available from your local Social Security Office, or by writing to:

Health Care Financing Administration
Inquiries Staff
Room GF-3, East Lowrise Building
Baltimore, MD 21207

MEDICAID

Medicaid (Medical Assistance Program) is a joint federal/state program to provide physical and related

health care services to persons with low incomes. People with disabilities may be eligible for Medicaid on the basis of their income.

Because eligibility is determined by your state program of public assistance (welfare) on the basis of broad federal guidelines, there are geographic differences between eligibility requirements and types of services covered. Generally, persons may be eligible for Medicaid if they are receiving welfare or other public assistance benefits or Supplemental Security Income or are blind or disabled. Medicaid services are available in all states.

Individuals with higher incomes may be eligible for Medicaid, Supplemental Medical Care Assistance, or their children may be eligible if medical expenses exceed a given percentage of their annual income. Each state establishes its own eligibility requirements for Medicaid.

Further information on Medicaid is available from your local or state welfare or public assistance office.

If you cannot get information locally, write to:

Health Care Financing Administration
Inquiries Staff
Room GF-3, East Lowrise Building
Baltimore, MD 21207

MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH PROGRAMS

The federal government awards special grants to states for projects that contribute to the advancement of maternal and child health. At least 30 percent of the federal awards must be used for services for children with special health care needs, including diagnostic services, early intervention training, and services development.

Up until 1981, this program was entitled, "Maternal and Child Health and Crippled Children's Services." This program is a joint federal/state program to provide medical and related services to children with disabilities from birth to age 21. The program affords states great flexibility in using the funds to address the unique health needs of their populations and in the selection of priority health programs.

All states must provide medical diagnosis and evaluation free for all children. No state residence period is required before such services are provided. The range and cost of additional treatment or hospital care services vary from state to state. All programs accept third party payments such as Medicaid, Blue Cross and Blue Shield, and other medical insurance.

For further information on what is available to your child with a disability, contact your local, county, or state health department.

EARLY PERIODIC SCREENING, DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT PROGRAM (EPSDT)

The Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment Program (EPSDT) screens children from economically disadvantaged families to identify whether health care or related services may be necessary, and to provide preventive and remedial care.

Children receiving state Aid to Families with Dependent Children benefits, and children whose parents or guardians are receiving Medicaid and/or state or local public assistance benefits are eligible for EPSDT. EPSDT programs vary from state to state and are administered by either state public assistance (welfare) or health departments.

For more information on EPSDT contact your local or state health department or public assistance office.

CIVIL RIGHTS

OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

A person with a disability has rights guaranteed by law to education, employment, health care, senior citizen activities, welfare, and any other public or private services in programs or activities that receive federal assistance.

It is the responsibility of the Office for Civil Rights in the U.S. Department of Education and the Office for Civil Rights in the U.S. Department of Health and Human

Services to enforce federal laws prohibiting discrimination against persons on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability in federally assisted programs or activities, and to investigate discrimination complaints brought by individuals under these statutes. If you feel your rights have been violated, because of your disability or your child's disability, by a hospital, school, or any other institution in any of their federally-funded programs or activities, write to the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S Department of Education (ED) about schools and postsecondary institutions, and to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) about hospitals or social services in your region.

The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) of the Department of Education (ED) enforces federal laws that prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability in programs and activities receiving federal funding from the Department of Education. OCR also enforces Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in state and local government entities, in public elementary and secondary educational systems and institutions, public institutions of higher education and vocational education (other than schools of medicine, dentistry, nursing, and other health-related schools), and public libraries. OCR investigates complaints filed by individuals, or their representatives, who believe that they have been discriminated against. OCR also offers technical assistance to help recipients voluntarily comply with civil rights laws and to inform citizens of their rights under these laws. OCR maintains a headquarters office in Washington, DC, and ten regional offices.

For more information about the civil rights laws enforced by OCR, how to file a complaint, or how to obtain technical assistance, contact the OCR regional office that serves your state or territory.

REGION I

CONNECTICUT, MAINE, MASSACHUSETTS, NEW HAMPSHIRE, RHODE ISLAND, VERMONT

Office for Civil Rights, ED
J.W. McCormack Post Office and Courthouse
Room 222
Boston, MA 02109-4557
(617) 223-9662
TDD (617) 223-9695

Office for Civil Rights, HHS
John F. Kennedy Federal Building
Room 1824
Boston, MA 02203
(617) 565-1340

REGION II

NEW JERSEY, NEW YORK, PUERTO RICO, VIRGIN ISLANDS

Office for Civil Rights, ED/HHS
26 Federal Plaza, 33rd Floor
Room 33-130
New York, NY 10278-0082
ED: (212) 264-4633/TDD (212) 264-9464
HHS: (212) 264-3313

REGION III

DELAWARE, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, MARYLAND, PENNSYLVANIA, VIRGINIA, WEST VIRGINIA

Office for Civil Rights, ED/HHS
3535 Market Street
Room 6300, 03-2010
Philadelphia, PA 19104-3326
ED: (215) 596-6772/TDD (215) 596-6794
HHS: (215) 596-1262

REGION IV

ALABAMA, FLORIDA, GEORGIA, NORTH CAROLINA, SOUTH CAROLINA, TENNESSEE

Office for Civil Rights, ED/HHS
101 Marietta Street
Post Office Box 2048
Atlanta, GA 30301-2048
ED: (404) 331-2954/TDD (404) 331-7236 –
27th Floor
HHS: (404) 331-2779 -- 15th Floor

REGION V

ILLINOIS, INDIANA, MICHIGAN, MINNESOTA, OHIO, WISCONSIN

Office for Civil Rights, ED
401 South State Street
Room 700C
Chicago, IL 60605-1202
(312) 353-2520/TDD (312) 353-2540

Office for Civil Rights, HHS
105 West Adams Street
Chicago, IL 60603
(312) 886-2359

REGION VI

ARKANSAS, LOUISIANA, MISSISSIPPI, OKLAHOMA, TEXAS

Office for Civil Rights, ED/HHS
1200 Main Tower Building
Dallas, TX 75202-9998
ED: (214) 767-3959/TDD (214) 767-3639 –
Suite 2260
HHS: (214) 767-4056 -- Suite 1360

REGION VII

IOWA, KANSAS, KENTUCKY, MISSOURI, NEBRASKA

Office for Civil Rights, ED
10220 North Executive Hills Boulevard
8th Floor
Kansas City, MO 64153-1367
(816) 891-8026/TDD (816) 374-6461

Office for Civil Rights, HHS
601 East 12th Street
Room 248
Kansas City, MO 64106
(816) 426-6367

REGION VIII

ARIZONA, COLORADO, MONTANA, NEW MEXICO, NORTH DAKOTA, SOUTH DAKOTA, UTAH, WYOMING

Office for Civil Rights, ED/HHS
Federal Building
1244 Speer Boulevard
Denver, CO 80204
ED: (303) 844-5695/TDD (303) 844-3417 -- Suite 310
HHS: (303) 844-2024 -- Suite 804

REGION IX

CALIFORNIA

Office for Civil Rights, ED/HHS
50 United Nations Plaza
San Francisco, CA 94102-4102
ED: (415) 556-7000/TDD (415) 556-6806 -- Room 239
HHS: (415) 556-8592/TDD (415) 556-8586 -- Room 322

REGION VII

IOWA, KANSAS, KENTUCKY, MISSOURI, NEBRASKA

Office for Civil Rights, ED
10220 North Executive Hills Boulevard
8th Floor
Kansas City, MO 64153-1367
(816) 891-8026/TDD (816) 374-6461

Office for Civil Rights, HHS
601 East 12th Street
Room 248
Kansas City, MO 64106
(816) 426-6367

REGION VIII

ARIZONA, COLORADO, MONTANA, NEW MEXICO, NORTH DAKOTA, SOUTH DAKOTA, UTAH, WYOMING

Office for Civil Rights, ED/HHS
Federal Building
1244 Speer Boulevard
Denver, CO 80204
ED: (303) 844-5695/TDD (303) 844-3417 -- Suite 310
HHS: (303) 844-2024 -- Suite 804

REGION IX

CALIFORNIA

Office for Civil Rights, ED/HHS
50 United Nations Plaza
San Francisco, CA 94102-4102
ED: (415) 556-7000/TDD (415) 556-6806 -- Room 239
HHS: (415) 556-8592/TDD (415) 556-8586 -- Room 322

REGION X

ALASKA, IDAHO, OREGON, NEVADA, AMERICAN SAMOA, TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS, WASHINGTON, HAWAII, GUAM

Office for Civil Rights, ED
Jackson Federal Building
915 2nd Avenue, Suite 3310
Seattle, WA 98174-1099
ED: (206) 442-1636/TDD (206) 553-6419

Office for Civil Rights, HHS
Blanchard Plaza Building, Suite 900
2201 Sixth Avenue
Seattle, WA 98121-2500
(206) 553-0473

OFFICE OF FEDERAL CONTRACT COMPLIANCE

Every employer doing business with the federal government must take "affirmative action" to hire people with disabilities. If you believe that you have been denied a job by such a contractor because of your disability, a complaint can be filed with the:

Office of Federal Contract Compliance
Department of Labor
Washington, DC 20210

ARCHITECTURAL AND TRANSPORTATION BARRIERS COMPLIANCE BOARD

The Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (P.L. 90-480) decreed that all buildings constructed, leased, or altered with federal funds since the passage of the Act must be accessible to individuals with disabilities.

The Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (ATBCB) is the federal agency created to enforce the standards. If you have a complaint about an inaccessible building or you would like to receive the

ATBCB's brochure, "Access America: The Architectural Barriers Act and You," contact:

Architectural and Transportation Barriers
Compliance Board
Office of Technical Assistance
1331 F Street, N.W.
Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20004
(202) 272-5434
800-USA-ABLE (Voice/TDD)

The Board offers technical assistance in a variety of areas including architectural and attitudinal barriers, housing, recreation, and transportation.

HOUSING

LOANS

If you have a disability and need to adapt your home to your needs, you may be eligible for a Title I Home Improvement Loan insured by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The HUD-insured loan can be used to remove architectural barriers, hazards, or inconvenient features in the home. Improvements can be handled on a do-it-yourself basis or through a contractor. The loans are applied for through banks or other lending institutions. HUD insures the lender against possible loss. For further information contact your nearest HUD office, or write to:

The Assisted, Elderly, and Handicapped Program
Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street, S.W.
Room 6116
Washington, DC 20410

Low income individuals may be eligible for loans from the Farmers Home Administration to purchase or repair a home which is located on a farm or in a very rural area. For more information, write to:

Farmers Home Administration
Department of Agriculture
Washington, DC 20250

RENT ASSISTANCE

Low income families (including those with disabilities) may be eligible for housing assistance payments from HUD. Payments by HUD are made directly to the owners of rental units to make up the difference between the HUD-approved rental amount and the amount the tenant is required to pay. Tenants pay an average of 30 percent of their adjusted income (gross income less certain deductions and exceptions). Rental assistance payments under this arrangement are not considered additional income to the tenant who is also eligible for Supplemental Security Income payments from the Social Security Administration.

For further information on rent assistance or other housing programs benefiting people with disabilities, write to:

Special Advisor on the Handicapped
U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development
Room 19184
Washington, DC 20410

TAX BENEFITS

In the computation of income tax, the Internal Revenue Service allows many medical and dental expenses to be deducted from income, provided you itemize deductions on Schedule A. Also, because of recent changes in tax laws, you may deduct only the amount of total medical expenses that exceeds 7.5 percent of your adjusted gross income (in this case, of the individual with a disability or his or her parents). Deductible items may include:

- special equipment such as a motorized wheelchair, specially equipped automobile, and special telephone for persons who are deaf;
- special items, including artificial teeth, artificial limbs, eyeglasses, hearing aids and their component parts, crutches, and dogs for individuals who are blind or deaf;

- payments for the installation of special equipment in the home or for similar improvements made for medical purposes, such as ramps, or elevators for heart patients. If these improvements increase the value of the property, expenses incurred will only be deducted to the extent that they exceed the increase in property value. Also, capital expenditures that are incurred by a physically disabled individual for the removal of structural barriers in his or her personal residence qualify as a medical expense deduction where the expenditure is necessary to accommodate the disability;
- payments to a special school for an individual who is mentally or physically disabled, if the principal reason for attendance is the institution's resources for alleviating the disability;
- under the Tax Reform Act of 1986, there is no longer an additional personal exemption for people who are blind. However, an individual who is blind is entitled to a higher standard deduction amount.

In addition, the IRS allows tax credits for the cost of disabled dependent or disabled spouse care. Payment to relatives who provide this care can be included if the relative is not your dependent or your child under age 19.

For additional information, contact the "Federal Tax Information and Forms" number listed under "Internal Revenue Service" in your telephone directory.

TRANSPORTATION

In recent years, the federal government has stepped up its efforts to make transportation systems more accessible to travelers with disabilities. New regulations have been passed and better information is now available to assist individuals with disabilities in planning trips and using public transportation systems.

Barriers still exist, however, and those with physical disabilities must plan ahead and prepare trips more carefully than the average traveler.

AIR

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) now requires each U.S. airline to have a national company policy (approved by the FAA) on accessibility and services to individuals with disabilities. These policies vary from airline to airline, so it is advisable to make your special needs as an individual with a disability known at the time you make your reservations and to inquire whether the airline provides the service you need.

For more information, contact the individual airline directly. Also helpful is the publication, "Access Travel: A Guide to Accessibility of Airport Terminals," available from:

The Consumer Information Center
Pueblo, CO 81009

RAIL

Amtrak, the country's major passenger rail system, will become increasingly more accessible to individuals with disabilities over the next few years. This federally-subsidized rail system has announced that it will add to its system only new cars fitted with special facilities for people with disabilities.

Information on accessibility of trains and stations and assistance available to passengers who are disabled or elderly may be obtained from an authorized travel agent or by calling Amtrak at 1-800-USA-RAIL.

People who are deaf with access to a TDD device may receive information and make reservations for travel by calling 1-800-523-6590 (except in Pennsylvania, call 1-800-562-6960).

Travelers with disabilities who have a card or physician's letter showing disability are allowed a 25 percent discount on round trip travel by Amtrak with the exception of certain holidays. Dog guides for people who are blind or deaf are the only animals allowed on

Amtrak. Amtrak also has a brochure, "Access Amtrak," for travelers with disabilities. To request a copy, write:

Amtrak Distribution Center
P.O. Box 7717
Itasca, IL 60143

THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 guarantees equal rights for people with disabilities in employment, public services, public accommodations, and telecommunications.

For more specific information about ADA requirements affecting employment contact:

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
1801 L Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20507
(202) 663-4900
(800) 800-3302 (TDD)
(202) 663-4494 (TDD)

For more specific information about ADA requirements affecting transportation contact:

Department of Transportation
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20590
(202) 366-9305
(202) 755-7687 (TDD)

For more specific information about requirements for accessible design in new construction and alterations contact:

Architectural and Transportation Barriers
Compliance Board
1331 F Street, N.W.
Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20004
800-USA-ABLE
800-USA-ABLE (TDD)

For more specific information about ADA requirements affecting telecommunications contact:

Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20554
(202) 632-7260
(202) 632-6999 (TDD)

For more specific information about ADA requirements affecting Public Services and Public Accommodations contact:

Office on the Americans with Disabilities Act
Civil Rights Division
U.S. Department of Justice
P.O. Box 66118
Washington, DC 20035-6118
(202) 514-0301
(202) 514-0318 (TDD)
(202) 514-0383 (TDD)

The National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) of the U.S. Department of Education has funded a network of 15 grantees to provide information, training, and technical assistance to businesses and agencies with duties and responsibilities under the ADA and to people with disabilities who have rights under the Act. There are ten regional **Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers**, three **Materials Development Projects** (two for employment and one for public accommodation/accessibility), and two **National Training Projects**, a peer and family training network and a local capacity-building program for independent living centers.

DISABILITY AND BUSINESS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTERS (DBTAC)

The ten regional Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers (DBTAC) focus on providing, within their respective regions, information and technical assistance to employers as well as people with disabilities, to facilitate appropriate implementation of the ADA, successful employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities, and greater accessibility in public

accommodations. In addition, the DBTACs will develop information resources, databases, reference guides, and expert consultant pools that will serve as resources for implementation of the technical assistance programs.

NATIONAL PEER TRAINING PROJECTS (NTP)

The two National Peer Training Projects (NTP) conduct training to enhance the capacity of people with disabilities and their organizations and to facilitate the implementation of the ADA. One NTP is focused on peer training of Independent Living Center staff, associates, and volunteers. The other NTP is focused on developing a peer and family training network in which individuals with disabilities or their parents or other family members will provide training to their peers throughout the country.

MATERIALS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS (MDP)

These three projects develop and test technical assistance and training materials and programs for use by the DBTACs and NTPs. Two of the MDPs are focused primarily on employment issues, developing training programs, materials and resources, or repackaging existing materials. The focus of the other MDP is on accessibility and public accommodation, developing or identifying and adapting self-administered survey guides, checklists, materials with information on design alternatives that can be used by the target audiences to evaluate and create accessible environments.

For additional information on the DBTACs, NTPs, and MDPs, please call 1-800-949-4232 (Voice/TDD) or the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) at (202) 205-8123/ TDD (202) 205-5479.

U.S. Department of Education
Washington, DC 20202-2524

Official Business
Penalty for Private Use $300

Postage and Fees Paid
U.S. Department of Education
ED 395
THIRD-CLASS MAIL

ED/OSERS 93-3

37